

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

What is claimed is:

1. A computer-implemented transaction management system for guiding a buyer and seller through the complete export/import trade process to achieve single cross-border merchandise trade transactions between the buyer and seller, and which system is fully integratable with the required third party service providers, comprising:

interface means, connected to the Internet, for enabling a buyer and seller to communicate with each other and with third party service providers on the Internet;

server means, connected to said interface means, for providing an application service provider environment capable of communication with said buyer and seller and with third party service providers on the Internet;

software applications, resident on said server means and created around an export/import trade business logic, for integrating and controlling said application service provider environment, and comprising:

means providing a pro forma template for guiding the buyer and seller to mutually create, in said application service provider environment, a pro forma quotation invoice which identifies cost elements, regulatory requirements, and third party service providers and their specific services to be rendered, and which enables the assignment of specific responsibilities to the buyer and seller;

means, using the created pro forma quotation invoice, for computing margin data for both the buyer and seller, and enabling a sub-process

of iterative negotiations and changes to the pro forma quotation invoice to achieve a pro forma invoice acceptable to both the buyer and seller for a particular transaction;

means, using the acceptable pro forma invoice for the particular transaction, for enabling the buyer to create a purchase order for the seller and converting the pro forma template to a commercial invoice transaction template for the particular transaction;

means, using the commercial invoice transaction template, for enabling the buyer and seller to monitor and track the movement of the merchandise and the activities of the contracted third party service providers, and creating and/or acquiring, storing, and distributing information and documentation pertaining to the particular transaction to achieve its completion; and

means, responsive to achieving completion of the particular transaction, for storing and archiving said information pertaining to the particular transaction.

2. The system of Claim 1, wherein said interface means comprise means for inputting information on the requirements of the buyer and the products offered by the seller to determine the existence of a supplier/purchaser relationship.

3. The system of Claim 1, wherein said interface means comprise means for enabling the buyer to request a quotation from the seller for the seller to supply to the buyer specific merchandise, at a specific time and place, for a specific price.

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4. A computer-implemented international trade method for managing, guiding and integrating the complete export/import trade process of single cross-border merchandise trade transactions on behalf of a buyer and seller, comprising the steps of:

providing an application service provider environment comprising the combination of Internet and computer server technology, and encryption and database software;

providing a series of software applications created around an export/import trade business logic for integrating and controlling said application service provider environment;

providing access for a buyer and seller to said application service provider environment through the Internet using personal computers and web browsers;

producing inputs from a buyer and seller through said remote personal computers and web browsers to said application service provider environment; and

completing, in response to said inputs from said buyer and seller, the export/import trade process of single cross-border merchandise trade transactions in said application service provider environment on behalf of said buyer and seller.

5. The method of Claim 4, wherein said inputs comprise information on the requirements of the buyer and the products offered by the seller to determine the existence of a supplier/purchaser relationship.

6. The method of Claim 4, wherein said inputs comprise the buyer's request for a quotation from the seller for the seller to supply to the buyer specific merchandise, at a specific time and place, for a specific price.

7. The method of Claim 4, wherein said inputs comprise the seller providing the buyer with a quotation on a pro forma invoice containing the various details of an export/import transaction.

8. The method of Claim 7, wherein said inputs comprise a negotiation exchange between the buyer and seller regarding the terms of sale, terms of delivery, and terms of payment expressed within the pro forma invoice.

9. The method of Claim 8, wherein said inputs comprise, upon completion of the negotiation exchange and agreement on said terms, issuance by the buyer to the seller of a purchase order.

10. The method of Claim 9, wherein said inputs comprise acceptance of the purchase order by the seller to begin the physical transaction process for obtaining buyer specific merchandise.

11. The method of Claim 4, wherein said inputs comprise finalizing payment on the part of the buyer and collection on the part of the seller upon completion of an export/import trade process of single cross-border merchandise trade transaction.

12. A computer-implemented international trade system that manages, guides and integrates the complete export/import trade process of single cross-border merchandise trade transactions on behalf of a buyer and seller, comprising:

an application service provider environment comprising the combination of Internet and computer server technology components and encryption and database software;

a plurality of software applications created around an export/import trade business logic for integrating and controlling said application service provider environment;

access means for a buyer and seller to access said application service provider environment and provide inputs remotely using personal computers and web browsers; and

means, responsive to inputs from said buyer and seller through said access means, for completing the export/import trade process of single cross-border merchandise trade transactions in said application service provider environment on behalf of said buyer and seller.

13. The system of Claim 12, wherein said access means comprise means for inputting information on the requirements of the buyer and the products offered by the seller to determine the existence of a supplier/purchaser relationship.

14. The system of Claim 12, wherein said access means comprise means for enabling the buyer to input a request for a quotation from the seller for the seller to supply to the buyer specific merchandise, at a specific time and place, for a specific price.

15. The system of Claim 12, wherein said access means comprise means for the seller to provide the buyer with a quotation in a pro forma invoice containing the various details of an export/import transaction.

16. The system of Claim 15, wherein said access means comprise means for enabling a negotiation exchange between the buyer and seller regarding the terms of sale, terms of delivery, and terms of payment expressed within the pro forma invoice.

17. The system of Claim 16, wherein said access means comprise means, responsive the agreement on said terms, for enabling the buyer to issue a purchase order to the seller.

18. The system of Claim 12, wherein said software applications comprise means providing a pro forma template for guiding the buyer and seller to mutually create, in said application service provider environment, a pro forma quotation invoice which identifies cost elements, regulatory requirements, and third party service providers and their specific services to be rendered, and which enables the assignment of specific responsibilities to the buyer and seller.

19. The system of Claim 18, wherein said software applications further comprise means, using the created pro forma quotation invoice, for computing margin data for both the buyer and seller, and enabling a sub-process of iterative negotiations and changes to the pro forma quotation invoice to achieve a pro forma invoice acceptable to both the buyer and seller for a particular transaction.

20. The system of Claim 19, wherein said software applications further comprise:

means, using the acceptable pro forma invoice for the particular transaction, for enabling the buyer to create a purchase order for the seller and converting the pro forma template to a commercial invoice transaction template for the particular transaction; and

means, using the commercial invoice transaction template, for enabling the buyer and seller to monitor and track the movement of the merchandise and the activities of the contracted third party service providers, and creating and/or acquiring, storing, and distributing information and documentation pertaining to the particular transaction to achieve its completion.